

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR PBOR ET MO SS MR AG

SUBJ: ETHIOPIAN POSITION ON FORMER SPANISH SAHARA

REF: ADDIS ABABA 10323 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: ETHIOPIAN FONMIN ATO KIFLE WODAJO IN SEPT. 15 PRESS CONFERENCE TO LOCAL AND FOREIGN JOURNALISTS, PARTICULARY THOSE INVITED FOR SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION, CAREFULLY DEFINED EPMG POSITION ON FORMER SPANISH SAHARA. EPMG POLICY HAS BEEN TO RESPECT RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF SAHARAN PEOPLES. IN EPMG VIEW MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA HAVE NOT SATISFACTORIL MET REQUIREMENTS TO ALLOW SAHARA PEOPLES SELF-DETERMINATION. AS A RESULT EPMG FAVORS A UN/OAU SOLUTION TO GUARANTEE SELF-DETERMINATION. HE STATED ETHIOPIA HAS RECONGNIZED POLISARIO AS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SAHARA PEOPLE. END SUMMAR.

1. DURING COURSE OF WIDE-RANGING PRESS CONFERENCE, (SEPT-01) FONMIN KIFLE RESPONDED AT LENGTH TO QUESTION
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ON "WESTERN SAHARA." THROUGHOUT RESPONSE HIS EMPHASIS WAS

ON SELF -DETERMINATION BY THE SAHARA PEOPLES. EPMG HAS DISAPPROVED OF MAURITANIAN AND MOROCCAN ACTIONS INTEGRATING SAHARAN PEOPLE INTO THEIR RESPECTIVE NATIONAL TERRITORIES. DESPITE CONSULTATIONS WITH SOME REPRESENTATIVES OF TRIBAL LEADERS, EPMG FEELS THIS DID NOT SATISFY REQUIREMENTS OF SELF-DETERMINATION. IN THEIR JUDGMENT OAU AND UN DEFINITIONS OF SELF-DETERMINATION HAVE NOT BEEN MET EITHER. KIFLE STATED SAHARAN PEOPLE WOULD BE GIVEN FULL OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS THEIR WISHES AND SHOULD BE ASSISTED BY OAU AND UN IN THIS REGARD.

2. ETHIOPIA HAS NOT RECOGNIZED NEW SAHAROUIAN DEMOCRATIC ARAB REPUBLIC YET BECAUSE, KIFLE SAID, "THERE WAS A FEELING AMONG THE MAJORITY OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES FOR AN OAU SOLUTION" NOT BECAUSE EPMG DID NOT RECOGNIZE THE RIGHT OF A PEOPLE TO FORM AN INDEPENDENT STATE. HE ADDED HOWEVER THAT ETHIOPIA HAS RECOGNIZED THE POLISARIO AS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SAHARAN PEOPLE.

3. COMMENT: IN SUPPORTING AN AOU SOLUTION FOR FORMER SPANISH SAHARA, WHICH EPMG WOULD EXPECT TO BE ONE OF PRESERVING TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY WITHIN FORMER COLONIAL BOUNDARIES, EPMG OBVIOUSLY IS KEEPING ITS OWN PROBLEMS IN ERITREA IN MIND. FONMIN KIFLE'S REMARKS ARE WHOLLY CONSISTENT WITH EPMG DESIRE FOR OAU SUPPORT OF ITS POSITION ON ERITREA, GIVEN TRADITIONAL POLICY OF OAU ON TERRITORIAL QUESTIONS STATED IN ITS CHARTER. END COMMENT. TIENKEN

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